

**NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**33 Years of Service to Improving Delaware's Quality Of Life**  
**"Preserving Delaware's Natural Areas Today for All Delawareans Tomorrow"**  
**MEETING**  
June 12, 2014  
Division of Waste and Hazardous Substances Conference Room  
Richards and Robbins Building  
Dover, DE 19901  
9:30 a.m.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Council Members:**

Debbie Heaton, Chair  
Christopher Heckscher  
Dean Holden  
Edward A. Lewandowski, Secretary  
Pete Martin  
Theodore Palmer, Jr.  
James White, Jr., Vice Chair  
John Williams, Esq.

**Guests:**

**Staff:**

Eileen Butler, Parks & Recreation, DNREC  
Ron Vickers, Parks & Recreation, DNREC  
Rose Ryodi, Parks & Recreation, DNREC

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**I. Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions/Announcements**

Ms. Heaton, Chairperson, called the Natural Areas Advisory Council meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. She welcomed Council members and staff and asked for announcements.

Ms. Butler welcomed Mr. Christopher Heckscher as a newly appointed Council member.

**II. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Motion was made by Ms. Heaton, and seconded to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2014 meeting. Minutes were approved with corrections.

**III. Old Business**

- **White Clay Creek Valley Nature Preserve – New Dedication**

Council agreed to invite Parks & Recreation Director Bivens to the December 11 meeting to clarify some questions the Council has regarding Nature Preserve dedication for the White Clay Creek State Park.

- **Murderkill River Nature Preserve – new dedication**

Ms. Butler shared an email provided by the Kent County Director of Public Works who had a conversation with the landowner regarding future conservation options.

- **Letter to Secretary O'Mara re Clean Water Initiative**

Council discussed a letter drafted by Ms. Heaton, thanking Secretary O'Mara for working to improve water quality in Delaware. Final draft was agreed upon and the letter was sent to Secretary O'Mara from the Chair on Council's behalf.

**IV. Natural Areas Registry**

Following the Natural Areas Preservation System regulations, a nomination form was prepared by the Office of Nature Preserves to extend the Doe Bridge Natural Area to the entire Godwin Tract, a Division of Parks & Recreation property located in Sussex County. The nomination form was approved by the Department Secretary and an additional 92 acres has been added to the Doe Bridge Natural Area. Staff will move forward with dedicating the entire 181 acres of the Godwin Tract as part of the Doe Bridge Nature Preserve.

**V. Nature Preserve Dedications**

- Fork Branch Natural Area – Ms. Butler shared with the Council that the Open Space Council approved funds for the use of the State to move forward with an acquisition of land within the Fork Branch Natural Area, downstream of the McClements Tract of the Fork Branch Nature Preserve. Staff is working with the landowner to acquire the land and plan to add it to the Nature Preserve.
- Great Marsh Natural Area – The Great Marsh Preserve is located just north of Lewes in Sussex County. This 923-acre property is owned by the State of Delaware and administered by the City of Lewes. Staff will be working with the City to dedicate the Natural Area as a Nature Preserve.

**VI. Nature Preserve Management Issues**

Nature Preserve Monitoring Schedule – Ms. Butler distributed the monitoring schedule for 2014. The Council was invited to participate in monitoring Nature Preserves.

**VII. New Business**

Mr. Vickers explained the Land & Water Conservation Trust Fund (LWCTF) is an endowment fund that uses interest it generates for grants to Delaware's municipalities, cities and towns towards recreation. Under the current investment strategy this trust fund generates very little interest. Mr. Vickers asked Council to write a letter of support for new legislation that would support moving the fund to a private entity. Council declined to get involved due to the perceived political implications.

**VIII. Public Comment and Synopsis Reports From Other Councils, Stakeholders, and Partners**

Mr. White said he attended the Parks Council meeting held at Brandywine Zoo on May 12. He said the Gordons Pond Trail at Cape Henlopen State Park was complete and will be officially opened on June 18 by Governor Markell.

**IX. 2014 Council Meeting Dates/Time**

The 2014 Natural Areas Advisory Council meetings will be held on Thursdays at the Division of Waste and Hazardous Substances conference room, DNREC, Richards & Robbins Building, 89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901, starting 9:30 a.m.

- September 11 – Field Trip to Abbott's Mill Nature Center/Milford Millponds Nature Preserve. Short business meeting to be followed by a tour of the Nature Preserve.
- December 11

**X. Adjournment**

Ms. Heaton asked for a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.